

**Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey
Reconnaissance Survey Final Report
of
Wheeler County, Nebraska
prepared for
Nebraska State Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office**

by

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June 1, 1988

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Save America's Heritage would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance and contributions to the completion of the Wheeler County Historic Buildings Survey. Their willingness to contribute their time and knowledge was sincerely appreciated.

David Murphy, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Deb McWilliams, Staff Assistant, NeSHPO

Joni Gilkerson, Architectural Historian, NeSHPO

Bob Puschendorf, Grants Administrator, NeSHPO

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This publication has been funded with the assistance of a federal grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service as administered through the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO).

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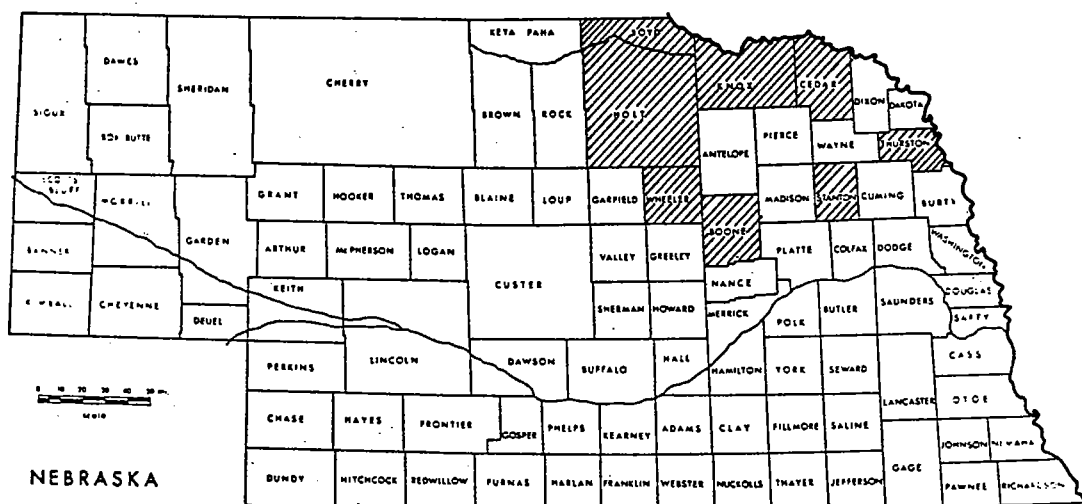
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INTRODUCTION

In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act was passed by the 89th United States Congress and subsequently signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. With this Act, the Secretary of the Interior was called upon to expand and maintain a national register of historic places and give maximum encouragement to state governments to develop statewide historic preservation programs of their own. The Act recognized that one of the prerequisites for an effective national preservation program was the identification of historic resources across the country through comprehensive statewide surveys. Thus, state historic preservation offices were made responsible under the National Historic Preservation Act for decisions concerning the preservation of historic properties in their states.

The manifestation of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act for Nebraska came in 1967 when state legislation directed the Nebraska State Historical Society to oversee the preservation of historical properties and conduct a comprehensive statewide historic survey. For this, the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) was formed and is conducted by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO) as a part of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The Nebraska Historic Building Survey is an ongoing statewide study designed to identify and evaluate properties within a selected area to determine whether they may be of historic, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance. The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office serves as the central repository for the collected information and becomes the focal point for preservation planning decisions.

Starting with a limited survey of 125 sites, the NeHBS has now documented approximately 32,000 properties and completed preliminary fieldwork in over half of Nebraska's 93 counties. The latest effort of the NeSHPO to document historic resources is the completion of the Northeast Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey.



Northeast Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Area

Save America's Heritage was selected by the NeSHPO and engaged in a contractual agreement to conduct the Northeast Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey. This survey consists of the completion of preliminary fieldwork in eight northeast Nebraska counties. These counties are Boyd, Holt, Wheeler, Boone, Knox, Cedar, Thurston, and Stanton. The survey of these counties was initiated in September of 1987 and was completed in June of 1988. With the completion of the eight-county project, northeast Nebraska is the first region of the state to be completed under the NeSHPO's recently stated five-year plan targeting preliminary statewide coverage for 1991-92.

The primary objective of the survey was to provide a preliminary characterization of the historic resources extant in the northeast Nebraska region. The effort to document properties contributing to the context of Nebraska's historic architecture produces information which not only serves as a resource in preservation management, but also expresses a genuine concern for the history of the Great Plains built environment.

In addition to this, there are several other objectives which enhance both the importance of information generated by the survey and the importance of the survey itself. First among these is the concept of establishing the setting of Nebraska's multi-contextual historic architecture. Each historic building survey performed by the NeSHPO generates information which contributes to a statewide knowledge and builds a background which future survey information can be evaluated with. Secondly, it was the objective of the historic building survey to identify specific properties or geographic areas which, in the event of an intensive survey, would contribute useful information to the multi-context setting. Further objectives of the northeast Nebraska survey included the identification of specific building types, the identification of construction methods which related to or were unique to Nebraska's historic built environment, the identification of sites worthy of National Register listing, and the expansion of knowledge regarding ethnic settlement, building technologies, and architectural images.

Preservation Biases

It is Save America's Heritage belief that people, and the places in which they live, are the raw materials of history. A community, its inhabitants and its development over an extended period of time are proper subjects for our contemplation, for it is through such studies that we gain a more sympathetic comprehension of the present.

The public mention of a "historic building survey" often fails to produce a collective image or understanding. A strong social awareness towards preserving our built environment does exist in the rehabilitation of aged urban districts, but the notion of recording historical structures as a preservation activity remains a publicly obscure concept. Fortunately, this obscurity is due to a lack of awareness rather than a lack of genuine concern. Communicating the importance of this activity as a documentation of our Great Plains history cannot be stressed enough.

Furthermore, it is also the opinion of Save America's Heritage that such surveys are a necessary tool in the recording of Great Plains settlement. The demise of Nebraska's rural architecture is directly

linked to the decline of the rural-based population. In the year 1900, 76.3% of Nebraska's population was found in rural towns or on the farms.¹ However, by 1980 the rural-based population has dropped nearly 40 percentage points to the current figure of 37.1% (see Table 1).

Table 1. Total Population.

Nebraska		Selected Years	
Year	Population	Percent of Total	
		Urban	Rural
1900	1,066,300	23.7	76.3
1910	1,192,214	26.1	73.9
1920	1,296,372	31.3	68.7
1930	1,377,963	35.3	64.7
1940	1,315,834	39.1	60.9
1950	1,325,510	46.9	53.1
1960	1,411,921	54.3	45.7
1970	1,485,333	61.5	38.5
1980	1,569,825	62.9	37.1

¹Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1980.

The affect on the historic built environment has been devastating. The number of houses now exceeds the demand and the older perhaps less appealing buildings are not re-inhabited. The buildings then deteriorate and are either dismantled or collapse. Consequently, there exists an increasing decline in the "pool" of historic building resources. Compounding the demise of these rural resources is the current decline of the agricultural economy. The prospect of farming as a profitable future for the next generations is now less desirable. This, in turn, contributes to the decreasing rural population and re-inhabitation of existing historic buildings. This is exemplified by the fact that 42.2% (19 of 45) of all farmsteads documented by the survey in Wheeler County consisted of either abandoned farms or farmhouses.

The enumeration of social changes affecting historic resources is endless. It is clear, however, that the result of these changes coupled with the diminishing affects of time substantiate the need for historic

building surveys. It is through such surveys that we not only record the built settlement of Nebraska, but reach a fuller understanding of our present world.

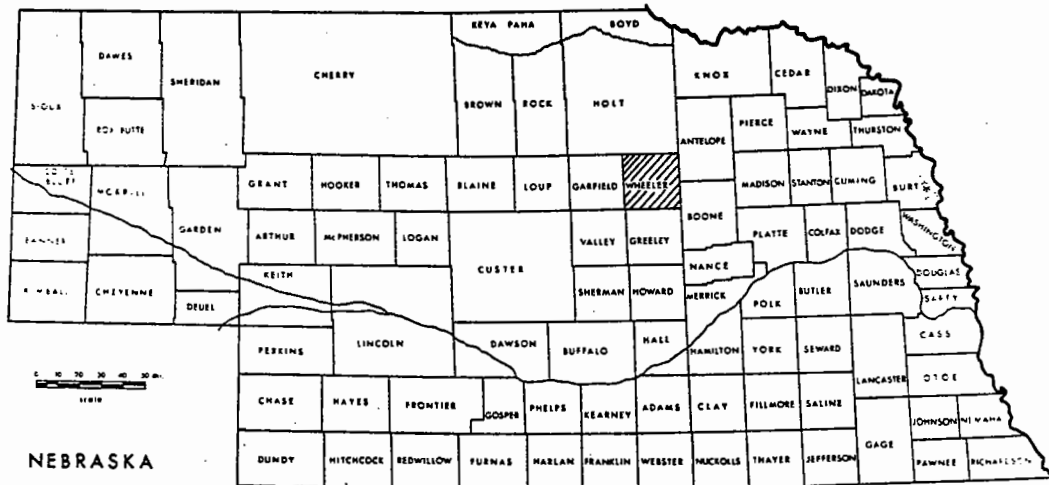
Numerical Summary of Wheeler County Properties

The success of the Wheeler County Historic Buildings Survey has been one of quantity if not always quality. The survey was conducted in an extremely thorough manner with every street of each town and nearly every county road covered using reconnaissance survey methods. The numerical results of the survey are as follows:

1. A total of 79 individual properties were documented within the county boundaries. This figure represents an increase of 5.3% over the pre-survey estimate of 75 sites.
2. Located on these 79 properties were a contributing total of 189 buildings, 42 structures, three objects, and three sites.
3. The geographic area covered by the survey included 199 square miles (127,480 acres) including each of the two extant towns.
4. The identification of 10 properties potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

<u>Wheeler County</u>	<u>Total properties</u>	<u>Contributing buildings</u>	<u>Contributing structures</u>	<u>Contributing objects</u>	<u>Contributing sites</u>
WH00: Rural	45	125	40	0	3
WH01: Bartlett	8	19	1	0	0
WH02: Ericson	20	36	1	3	0
WH03: Ericson Lake	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	79	189	42	3	3

HISTORIC OVERVIEW



Physical Description

Wheeler County is located slightly northeast of the geographical center of the state. It is bounded by Holt County on the north, Antelope and Boone to the east, Greeley to the south, and Garfield to the west. The county is nearly square in shape with an area of 568 square miles.

Wheeler County is composed of two distinct physiographic regions. The loess covered uplands well-suited to agricultural production are located in the southeast corner of the county. This soil type is also found in small isolated pockets in the eastern and southern parts of the county. The remainder of the county, approximately 96% of the total area, is a part of the Sandhills region of north central Nebraska. The Sandhills include dune sand and rough, broken land which do not easily retain moisture. These lands are suitable for grazing or for some carefully managed cropping.

Drainage is carried into the Elkhorn and Loup Rivers. Most of the streams in the county are without surface tributaries and are fed by

seepage through the sandhills soil. The Cedar River and Clearwater Creek are swift flowing and are actively deepening their channels. Well water is readily available and of excellent quality in all parts of the county.

The climate is typical of Nebraska with hot summers and cold winters. Mean annual precipitation is nearly 22 inches, most of which falls during the growing season April through September.

Native vegetation in the area consisted primarily of grasses. Trees grew only in narrow strips of bottom land or later, in planted groves in the uplands.

The Original Inhabitants

The area which is now Wheeler County was not, for the most part, permanently inhabited by any Indian group. The area was rich in game and the Ponca, Pawnee, and Sioux hunted there. By the 1850s the Sioux had asserted their claim to the territory north of the Platte River. A series of treaties in the 1850s through the 1870s further restricted Indian rights. In 1875 the Sioux agreed to relinquish their hunting rights between the Platte and Niobrara Rivers. At this time they were removed to the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations in South Dakota (Tubbs, p. 18).

Settlement of Nebraska

The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 opened the territory of what is now Nebraska to settlement by whites. Nebraska was organized as a state in 1867. The general directions of settlement proceeded from the southeast corner of the state to the north along the Missouri River and westward along the Platte Valley. There was little interest, except by trappers and traders, in the area which is now Wheeler County.

The federal government did much to encourage settlement of frontier lands. The Pre-Emption Act of 1841, the original cornerstone of the nation's land policy, was the method by which settlers of territorial Nebraska secured their land.

The Homestead Act of 1862 provided for up to a quarter section of "free" land to heads of families who had paid the \$10 filing fee and resided on or cultivated the land for five consecutive years. The Timber

Culture Act, approved in 1873, was supplemental to the Homestead Act. It provided that a homesteader could acquire an additional quarter section by planting 40 acres to trees and caring for them for 10 (later eight) years.

Even with these incentives, northwest Nebraska remained a frontier area. A quarter or even half section of land was often not sufficient to support a family. This was especially true in the drought years of the 1890s when settlement of the area was just getting underway. Cattlemen in the area used the Homestead Act to secure rights to water holes and stream fronts for their large cattle grazing operations and were not interested in seeing the situation change.

In order to encourage settlement in the sparsely populated areas in the northwestern two-thirds of the state, Moses P. Kinkaid introduced a bill in the House of Representatives to amend the Homestead Act. The Kinkaid Act, as it came to be known, increased the size of the homestead to compensate the settler in quantity of land for what it lacked in quality and productiveness. The law went into effect in June of 1904. The nearest U.S. land office for application was in O'Neill in neighboring Holt County.

The Kinkaid Act applied to lands west of the 98th meridian. Under provisions of the Act the homestead unit was not to exceed 640 acres and irrigable land should not be included. Homesteaders who already occupied lands under previous acts were allowed to acquire contiguous lands up to 640 acre maximum. Final proof to acquire the patent for the additional lands could not be made until five years after passage of the Act or five years after acquiring the additional land, whichever came first. It was also necessary for the homesteader to place permanent improvements on the claim which were valued at \$1.25 per acre (Reynolds, p. 23).

By 1912 nearly all the lands in the area in which the Kinkaid Act applied were taken, thus closing the story on this piece of experimental land legislation. The success of the Kinkaid Act led to the enactment of the Stock-Raising Homestead Act of 1916 which contained substantially the same provisions and applied to other states in the West.

County History

The first permanent settlement in what is now Wheeler County was made in 1874 along the Cedar River in what was then unorganized territory. The completion of Fort Hartsuff to the west did much to quell prospective settlers' fears of Indians in the area. By ~~1877~~¹⁸⁸¹ there were enough people to meet the requirement of 200 people within 450 square miles and so Wheeler County was formed. It contained the present-day counties of Wheeler and Garfield.

Cedar City, platted in 1881, was designated the county seat of the new county and was located six miles north of Ericson at about the midpoint of the county. A courthouse was constructed but most of the buildings were constructed of sod. The town failed to develop. The western half of the county was taken to form Garfield County in 1884 which created the present-day boundaries of Wheeler County. Bartlett, the county seat, located near the center and Ericson, located in the southwestern portion of the county, are the only two towns in Wheeler county.

Bartlett was established in 1885 on land given to the town by Ezra Bartlett Mitchell for whom the town was named. The original plat contained nine blocks with the center being reserved for the courthouse. The original courthouse burned in 1917. After the fire, efforts were made to move the county seat to Ericson. The question was settled permanently as voters defeated the proposition in a special election. Funds were voted to help construct a new courthouse. The new concrete block courthouse was constructed in 1920 and remains a landmark in the community.

By the end of the 1880s there were numerous businesses in the town. The first bank was opened in 1890. Many businesses have come and gone but a few remain to serve the people of Wheeler County. No commercial buildings were surveyed in Bartlett.

Bartlett only had a grade school until 1912. After passage of a law mandating secondary education, a high school was constructed in 1914. Because the area was sparsely populated and distances between farms and ranches were great, it was necessary to construct both boys' and girls' dormitories to house students while attending high school in Bartlett.

Three schools or dormitories were surveyed as part of the architectural reconnaissance survey.

Three houses ca. 1900-1910 and the fairgrounds were the only other properties surveyed in Bartlett. In general, properties in the community lack integrity with many buildings being altered by the application of stucco.

Settlement of Wheeler County was stimulated by the possibility of the railroad coming through the county. The Burlington had built a line as far as Greeley to the south by 1887, and there were plans to extend the line north and west to the Blackhills. These plans did not materialize, and the railroad reached only as far into the county as the town of Ericson (see Figure 1).

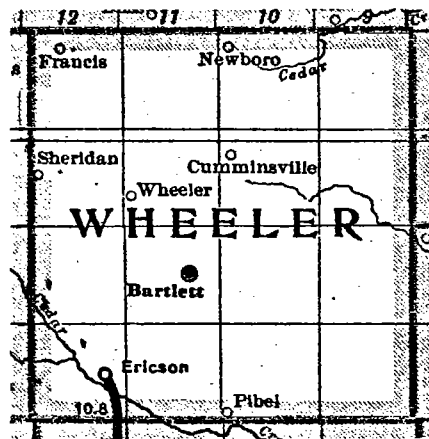


Fig. 1. Location of the railroad in Wheeler County in 1907 after the Official Railway Map of Nebraska, 1907.

The land for the townsite of Ericson was purchased by the Lincoln Land Company in 1887, and the town was dedicated in November of that year. The first train rolled into Ericson in 1888. The railroad brought in supplies for local stores and the lumberyard and shipped out carloads of livestock to market. Passenger trains took people to Aurora and Central City for major shopping trips. The CB & Q depot was documented as part of the survey.

From the coming of the railroad until the Depression years of the 1930s was the time of the greatest settlement and business activity in Ericson. An enclave of four false front general commercial buildings and a livery all ca. 1890s were documented. The survey also documented 12 vernacular frame houses ranging in construction date from the 1890s through the 1920s.

Beginning during the dry years of the 1890s, irrigation and other water projects were a major concern. Plans were made and several irrigation dams and canals were constructed between 1894 and 1910. In 1916 a dam was built with its major purpose being the generation of electricity. As a result of the construction of this dam, Lake Ericson was created. This lake has been of great value in providing a recreational area to those living in the vicinity (Laseke, p. 11). Numerous cabins dot the lakeside. Six small, gable roofed cabins were documented as part of the survey. The flavor of a late 1920s development is retained even though the materials of many of the cabins have been altered.

Ethnic Groups in Wheeler County

The ethnic diversity of the people who settled and made their homes and livelihoods there are an important part of the history of Wheeler County. People from many states and over 15 foreign countries came to make their homes there, adding richness to the social fabric of the county.

Information on numbers of foreign born are taken from Wayne Wheeler's compilation of census data. Since no detailed census analysis was performed, the locations of various ethnic settlements within the county must be inferred primarily from local histories and other secondary sources. Evidence of the various ethnic groups' presence is indicated by the institutions which they founded. Churches, cemeteries, and fraternal organizations are examples of such institutions. In some cases, secondary sources mention specific ethnic groups as having settled in a particular area. In any event, a precinct-by-precinct census analysis should be performed to obtain a more precise picture of ethnic settlement.

The 1880 census was the first available for Wheeler County. In that year the foreign born comprised 15% of the total population. The percentage of foreign-born persons in Wheeler County was smaller than many other counties in Nebraska. In neighboring Boone County the foreign-born comprised 19% of the total population in 1880. As the influx of foreign-born settlers slowed and children of the foreign born were born in the U.S., the percentages of foreign-born persons in Wheeler County decreased and in 1910 the foreign born comprised only 8% of the total population.

A large number of early foreign-born settlers in Wheeler County had Anglo cultural associations. These persons were English speaking Canadians or were born in England, Scotland, or Wales. In the 1880 census this group represented 8% of the county's total population. Persons from England, Scotland, or Wales were the largest foreign-born group and English speaking Canadians the second largest. As other foreign-born groups came into the county, those with Anglo cultural associations accounted for smaller and smaller percentages of the total population.

German-born persons were the largest foreign-born group in the state, and Wheeler County was no exception. Germans were the third largest foreign-born group in the 1880 census but were the largest in succeeding census years. German surnames can be seen in nearly every precinct on old county atlases.

Persons born in Sweden comprised the third largest foreign-born group in the 1890, 1900, and 1910 census years. Scandinavians, in general, tended to be later in arrival than many of the ethnic groups which came to Nebraska. The Swedes who came to Wheeler County followed this trend. The town of Ericson is named after the Swedish father and two sons who had homesteaded on, then sold, the land to the town.

Agriculture

Agricultural pursuits form the basis of the Wheeler County economy and because of this importance the agriculture of the county has been studied extensively. Nebraska is a large state with a variety of soil types and differing climatic conditions which make it necessary for the farmer to adapt farming practices to local conditions. It should also be

noted there are few distinct areas where abrupt changes in farming practices are evidenced.

Several authors associated with the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture (Hedges and Elliott; Garey; Williams and Murfield) have described systems of farming in Nebraska to refer to areas with a high degree of uniformity in the type of farming practiced and the economic and environmental conditions of the defined area.

Wheeler County is composed of two types of farming areas. The northwestern quarter of the county is on the eastern edge of the Sandhills where the system of farming is North-Central Range Livestock. The rest of the county is an area where the system of farming is Northeastern Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain. The Northeastern Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain area is a transitional between the Range Livestock of the Sandhills and the more intensive farming to the east and south.

There are a variety of soils in the area but most are rather sandy in texture and low in water-holding capabilities. The light nature of the soils renders them susceptible to wind erosion.

The North-Central Range Livestock area of Wheeler County is principally a cattle ranching area. The grasses covering the sandhills are palatable, but not suited to the finishing of grass-fat cattle. For this reason, cow herds are maintained and young cattle sent to areas further east for finishing. Sheep are not well adapted to the area as they graze too closely and tramp delicate grasses into the sand leaving grazing areas susceptible to erosion (Hedges and Elliott p. 59).

Only about 8% of the land in the Range Livestock area is suitable for cultivation. Wild hay occupied about two-thirds of the land between 1910 and 1934. Approximately two-thirds of the cultivated land was devoted to corn production between 1910 and 1934. This area is suited for cattle grazing rather than grain production (Garey, pp. 49-50).

In recent years some center-pivot irrigation was developed in the area. These lands were reshaped to accommodate the center-pivots and later found to be unsuitable for irrigation. In many sections of this area severe erosion has occurred where center-pivots were abandoned (Williams and Murfield, p. 21).

As settlers came into the Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain area of Wheeler County, they brought with them the same agricultural practices they had known in the Midwest cornbelt. Corn was the usual first crop put in by the settlers (Fite, p. 246). The necessity of adapting farming practices to the local conditions was illustrated by the comments of an early Holt County settler. "We plowed furrows about three inches deep and dropped corn in every fourth furrow. This was not much better than planting it on top of the ground" (Yost, p. 87).

The grain crops corn, oats, barley, wheat, rye, alfalfa, and wild hay were important in the area. Cattle and a few hogs are the predominant livestock.

By the 1930s the Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain system of farming was well established. In 1925 Wheeler County farms averaged over 50% of the farm area in hay (Hedges and Elliott, p. 22). In 1934, 10,397 acres were devoted to corn production with smaller acreages devoted to small grains (Census of Agriculture, p. 347). There were 19,022 head of cattle and 4,523 hogs reported in the county (Census of Agriculture, p. 339).

The importance of livestock to the county has remained. In 1969 over 90% of the farms in the county reported some kind of livestock which amounted to over 90% of receipts from livestock and livestock products (Williams and Murfield, p. 33).

Data from the Census of Agriculture for the years 1910 (p. 38), 1935 (p. 334), and 1982 (p. 132) reveal the number of farms has dropped substantially, particularly since 1935. In 1910 there were 476 farms in the county and by 1934 the number had dropped to 436; however, by 1982 the number had dropped to only 195. The decline in the number of farms would suggest a large number of abandoned farmsteads might be found during reconnaissance survey. It is especially important to document these photographically before they are lost to us for all time.

As the number of farms has declined, the average size of the farms in Wheeler County has increased. The average size farm in the county was 1,569 acres in 1982. Due to the environmental conditions of the area, the average farm size has always been larger than state averages. In 1910 the average farm size in the state was 298 acres but in Wheeler County the

average size farm was 666 acres. The average farm in Wheeler County is still over twice the state average.

Final Comments

The Wheeler County economy is, and has always been, based on agriculture. The agricultural base is characterized by range livestock plus wild hay supplemented by cash grains in some areas. The two towns of Bartlett and Ericson serve the rural population and have remained quite small. The county was settled by people who came from many states and foreign countries who came together to establish a rich social fabric which continues today.

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GENERAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Any discussion which analyzes the quality or volume of the surveyed properties in Wheeler County must include a summary of the environmental conditions which predominate the county. The results of the Historic Buildings Survey are directly linked to the natural environment which existed when the first permanent settlers constructed their domestic and agricultural shelters. The environmental conditions encountered by the settlers of the early 1880s have, in general, changed very little. Therefore, by examining the environmental conditions which exist today, one can gain a better understanding of the factors affecting the creation of the historic built environment in Wheeler County.

Wheeler County lies in the eastern portion of the Nebraska Sandhills. The Sandhills region is a vast and picturesque area of land which stretches across much of northwest and north central Nebraska. The majority of Wheeler County is comprised of this topographic type as illustrated in Figure 2.

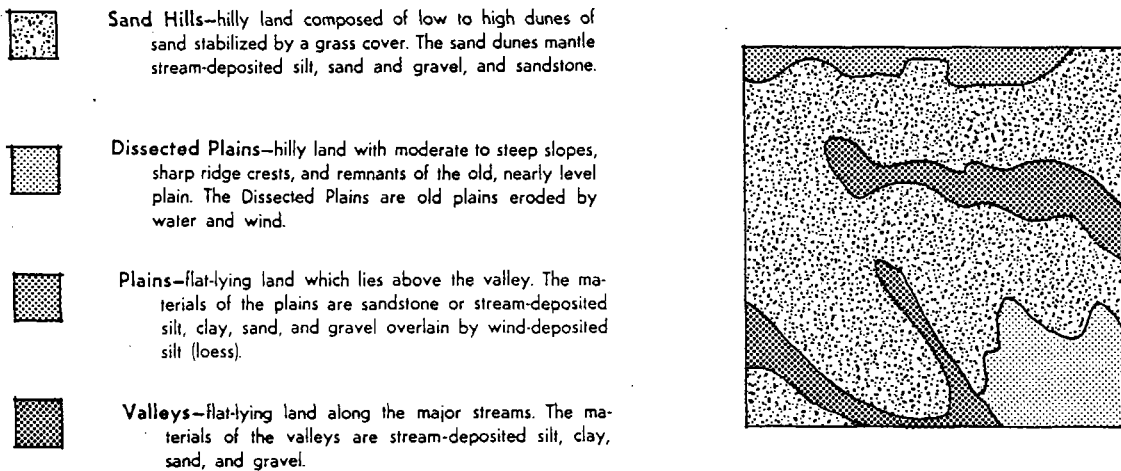


Fig. 2. Predominance of Sandhills region in Wheeler County.

The Sandhills have been appropriately named for they consist primarily of hilly dunes of sand stabilized by grassy covers. The beauty of this area, however, is often deceptive for the sandhills can be a harsh

and overpowering environment for both human and animal habitation. The historic built environment of Wheeler County can be viewed as a physical extension of the climatic and geographic conditions extant within the Sandhills. The physical creation of human and animal shelters were controlled by the environment in which those original builders lived. The number and survivability of the historically built properties were, and continue to be, at the mercy of the land and climate. Not only were the number of properties built during the settlement period relatively low, but many of these buildings have failed to survive the harsh climate of the Sandhills. Of those buildings which did survive, many lack historic integrity due to alteration of deterioration. The most common form of alteration witnessed by the survey team was the later application of stucco materials over the original wood sheathing. The frequency of this phenomenon was relatively high for most of the occupied farmsteads and community buildings. This is attributed to the fact that the light sand-based soil is often carried up by high velocity winds and, in essence, is sandblasting the finish paint off of the wood siding. Later applications of stucco materials have therefore solved the problem of frequent painting for those who still occupy the historic buildings.

In light of the environmental make-up of Wheeler County, the numerical results of the survey were not anticipated to be staggering and indeed they were not. In fact, only 79 total properties were documented within the 576 square miles which constitute Wheeler County. The breakdown of these 79 properties includes 189 contributing buildings, 42 contributing structures, six contributing objects and sites, and only 10 properties judged potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Compounding the problem of limited resources is the fact that Wheeler County was, historically, a very sparsely populated county. Indeed, the greatest population base existed between 1920 and 1930 when the totals reached a mere 2,300 people. In 1980, Wheeler County was home to only 1,060 persons which ranked it 84th among 93 Nebraska counties for total population. This 1980 total translates to a sparse density of 1.8 persons per square mile.

Also indicative of the declining population base are the statistics recorded by the agricultural census of 1910, 1934, and 1982 which delineate the number of farms within Wheeler County for each of these years. In 1910 there existed 476 operative farmsteads within the 576 square miles contained by the county. This translates to one farm for every 1.2 square miles of land in the county. The average farm size in Wheeler County in this year was already 666 acres versus the statewide norm of only 298 acres. This indicates that the initial permanent settlement of Wheeler County in terms of population and distribution was relatively small and dispersed. By 1934, these figures had changed very little. At that time there were 436 operating farms (one every 1.3 square miles) which represents a post-Depression drop of only 8.5%. However, by 1982 there were only 195 farms left in Wheeler County. This represents a 124% decline in the number of operating farmsteads within the 48-year period from 1934 to 1982. This was a devastating reduction which was clearly reflected in the low numerical results of the survey and subsequent lack of potentially eligible National Register properties.

In general summary, the Historic Buildings Survey of Wheeler County may be viewed as a direct physical extension of the environmental climate of the Nebraska Sandhills. This environment has dictated the agricultural and economic practices which it will allow and has forced the builders of human and animal shelters to adapt accordingly.

For a more specific review of the 79 historic properties recorded in Wheeler County, Save America's Heritage has devised a three-part summary consistent with the requests of the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. These three parts are presented in the following order:

1. A topical discussion of the properties according to building types,
2. A supertype summary of predominant historic house shapes, and
3. A presentation of the 10 individual properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

General Summary Part 1:

A Topical Outline of Historic Properties in Wheeler County, Nebraska

Religion:

Surprisingly enough, the Historic Buildings Survey of Wheeler County did not produce a single religious building worthy of documentation. This includes all church buildings located in either the rural environs or in Bartlett (WH01), Ericson (WH02), or Ericson Lake (WH03). The only religious-related properties recorded by the survey were three rural cemeteries which contained no particular historic significance.

Legal System:

Only one historic property was recorded in Wheeler County which falls within this theme. This was the Wheeler County Courthouse (WH01-2) which was constructed in 1920. Unfortunately, the courthouse has suffered some alterations since that time and is not considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The most noticeable lack of integrity is found in the later addition of an exterior stucco covering. This building also houses the Wheeler County Historical Museum. While not considered to be of extraordinary historic or architectural significance, the Wheeler County Courthouse was included in the Topical Listing as a property of secondary importance which contributes to the historic built environment of Wheeler County.

Education:

A total of eight educational-related properties were documented in Wheeler County. Four of these buildings were rural schoolhouses located in the outlying environs of Wheeler County (WH00-1, 20, 22, 38). Of the four rural schoolhouses, three were found in an abandoned and deteriorated condition (WH00-1, 20, 22). The fourth rural school building, the District #20 Center Schoolhouse (WH00-38), is still in operation and was judged as potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, two of the three abandoned rural schools mentioned above were included in the Topical Listing as contributors to

the historic character of Wheeler County and are worthy of preservation. These are WH00-20, a one-story hipped roof concrete block building known locally as Headquarters School due to its close proximity to Headquarters Ranch (WH00-19); and WH00-22, a one-story frame, T-shaped building.

The remaining four of the eight total school buildings were recorded in town locations. Three of these four were documented on the Bartlett Public School grounds (WH01-6, 7, 8) and were constructed at various times throughout the 1920s. The fourth community-based school was recorded in the survey of Ericson Lake (WH03-5) and, judging from its apparent date of construction (ca. 1900), could well have been an extant rural schoolhouse which was incorporated into the lakeside development which occurred in 1916. None of the four community-based school buildings were judged potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. However, in consideration of the relatively low numbers of this functional type within the county, two of the town schools were included in the Topical Listing as contributors to the historic character of Wheeler County. These are WH01-6 and WH01-8.

Diversion:

Diversion is the contextual title which encompasses all human activities relating to recreation, entertainment, sports, and travel. The Historic Buildings Survey of Wheeler County produced two historic areas which fit this title. These were the Wheeler County Fairgrounds in Bartlett (WH01-5) and the dammed portion of the Cedar River known as Ericson Lake (WH03). Of these two sites, only the fairgrounds have been preliminarily recommended for potential National Register listing. The Ericson Lake area is included in the discussion at this point as a site which merits further study by the NeSHPO to establish its level of historic significance.

The Wheeler County Fairgrounds consist of 12 circa 1925 frame buildings and structures arranged on approximately 15 acres of county-owned land. The most significant of these buildings are the grandstand bleachers, livestock barns, show barn, and judge's tower. The 12 buildings which compose the fairgrounds exhibited a high degree of integrity

and were considered locally significant for their role in socially related agriculture activities in a county which is predominated by the livestock producing industry.

The initial founding of Ericson Lake may also be attributed to an outgrowth of agriculture-related activities. The early permanent settlers of the 1880s and 1890s were constantly plagued by severe droughts. In an effort to alleviate this problem, an attempt was made in 1894 to dam the Cedar River just west of Ericson and use the water for purposes of irrigation. The first wood and earth dam built in 1894 by Charles Stitzer on the Eric Erickson farm lasted only one year and was replaced by a second dam which lasted only two years until 1897. At that time, a third dam was built which, in conjunction with a power wheel and flour mill, survived until 1910. Then the irrigation project was abandoned and the dam was dismantled. Finally in 1916, the Ericson Lake Company was again formed by Charles Stitzer with the intent of building a dam for the generation of electricity. The dam was completed in April of that year and operated under various ownerships until the late 1960s. The lake itself had been a site of community recreation since the 1916 opening which was attended by over 1,500 people. The primary dwelling type constructed on the north and west shores following the opening of the lake were simple, one-story frame cabins used primarily on a seasonal basis (see Figure 3).

The number of cabins adjacent Ericson Lake totalled more than 100 in the mid-1970s with most of these apparently constructed during the 1920s. The Ericson Lake area has witnessed a decline in recreational activities since its original founding in 1916 but nonetheless remains a historic enclave worthy of further investigation by the NeSHPO.



Fig. 3. Typical seasonal dwelling of Ericson Lake, Nebraska (ca. 1918).

Commerce:

Typically, historic properties relating to the theme of Commerce often constitute a large percentage of the buildings recorded in a reconnaissance survey. However, the pattern will be, for understandable reasons, far below the numbers of other counties surveyed in the northeast Nebraska survey project. Indeed this held true as only six commerce-related properties were documented in Wheeler County. This small pool of historic commerce properties is directly attributed to the small population base of the county. In fact, Wheeler County contains only two towns which had 1980 populations of 144 and 132 and peak populations of 275 and 250. Consequently, there was not a large number of commercial properties available for documentation and what numbers there were have been further decreased by alterations to their historic integrity. In most cases, these alterations took the form of changes in exterior sheathing materials and the installation of new windows in street level facades. Each of the six frame commercial properties that were documented in Wheeler County

were located in Ericson (WH02). There were no commercial properties worthy of NeHBS recording in the county seat of Bartlett (WH01).

Settlement Systems:

Settlement Systems is a broad contextual title which encompasses the division, acquisition, and ownership of land. This theme also contains any political, religious, or commercial activities which facilitated the cultural settlement of previously unsettled lands.

Not surprisingly, this topic contained the greatest number of documented historic properties within Wheeler County. Out of the 79 total properties recorded in Wheeler County, 58 or 73% fall within the theme of Settlement Systems. Of these 58 properties, 38 were farmsteads located in the rural environs while the remaining 20 were single-family dwellings located in Bartlett, Ericson, and Ericson Lake. These figures are astonishingly low in comparison to other non-Sandhills counties of the northeast Nebraska survey and once again points out the definitive impact of the environment on the development and survivability of historic buildings.

The condition of the 58 properties recorded within this theme were, in general, lacking historic integrity or in a state of deterioration. This is exemplified by the fact that 47% of the 38 rural properties documented by the survey were abandoned and subsequently deteriorated. The majority of the historic farms consisted of common animal-related agriculture buildings such as cattle and hog barns, drive-thru corn cribs, granaries, and loafing sheds. These farms also contained the necessary domestic buildings such as house, garage, privy, cellar, and summer kitchen. Of the 58 properties placed within this theme, five were judged as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and are included in the Preliminary Inventory. These five properties are WH00-11, WH00-14, WH00-30, WH00-44, and WH03-1. In addition, four more properties were included in the Topical Listing of Historic Properties as contributors to the historic character of Wheeler County. These four sites (WH00-17, WH00-28, WH00-41, WH02-8) were considered to be of secondary priority in respect to National Register listing.

Communication:

The historic context of Communication consists of the transfer of information from location to location or from individual to individual. This includes communication through the means of telegraph, telephone, television, postal service, newspaper, and radio. Normally, one would anticipate a large number of existing building types which would potentially fit this category not the least of which being post offices, newspaper offices, and telephone buildings. However, the Historic Buildings Survey of Wheeler County produced only one communication-related building worth of documentation. This building, the former Ericson Post Office (WH02-12), is a somewhat non-descript concrete block structure built sometime around 1915. The building was not judged to contain architectural or historical significance and was therefore not recommended as a potentially eligible National Register property.

Transportation:

The final topic of discussion in this outline deals with the historic context of Transportation. This theme consists of any activities which relate to the carrying, moving, or conveying of material and people from one place to another. As in the case of communication, the discussion of transportation-related buildings documented in Wheeler County is brief. In fact, only one property was recorded which fits this context. This is the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Depot (WH02-1) located in Ericson. This depot was constructed in 1888 and is in fact the only depot ever constructed in Wheeler County. This building was judged to contain historical significance and was therefore recommended as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

General Summary Part 2:

A Supratype Summary of Wheeler County House Types

It is no surprise that domestic architecture is the most frequently recorded resource in reconnaissance-level surveys. The Wheeler County survey was no exception producing a total of 55 residential resources. This total represents 29% of the 189 contributing buildings and structures

within the study area. The preservation of this building type can be attributed to the continuing social need for shelter and the predominant location of residences in towns where the opportunity for occupancy is greater. The recording of residential buildings in the Wheeler County survey included not only occupied resources, but abandoned as well. In addition, all houses that were surveyed as part of a church site or farmstead were included in the aforementioned totals.

In consideration of the large abundance of these resources and in an attempt to avoid "stylistic" designations, the method of Core Supratype Analysis (as developed by the Midwest Vernacular Architecture Committee, D. Murphy: 1985) has been implemented. The supratype analysis eliminates the subjective labeling of domestic buildings according to "style" and imposes instead, an objective description based on the primary external mass of the house. To best define the components of this method, an excerpt from the South Bottoms Historic District National Register Nomination (D. Murphy: 1987, 1-4) is included below.

The supratype is a categorization based exclusively on the external massing of houses, similar to that first developed by Kniffen (1936) under the ruberick of "type." The term "supratype" is applied here to distinguish it from the more current methods of type analysis which are based on form, that is, on external massing and internal space, such as that developed by Glassie (1975).

Core supratypes are defined by combinations of five massing elements as applied to the core structure of houses. Core structure is defined as the predominant mass element which cannot be further subdivided (Figure 4). In general, core refers to that portion of a house which is exclusive of wings and porches. The mass elements which compose the core include its shape, relative size, wall height, roof type, and its orientation on the site.

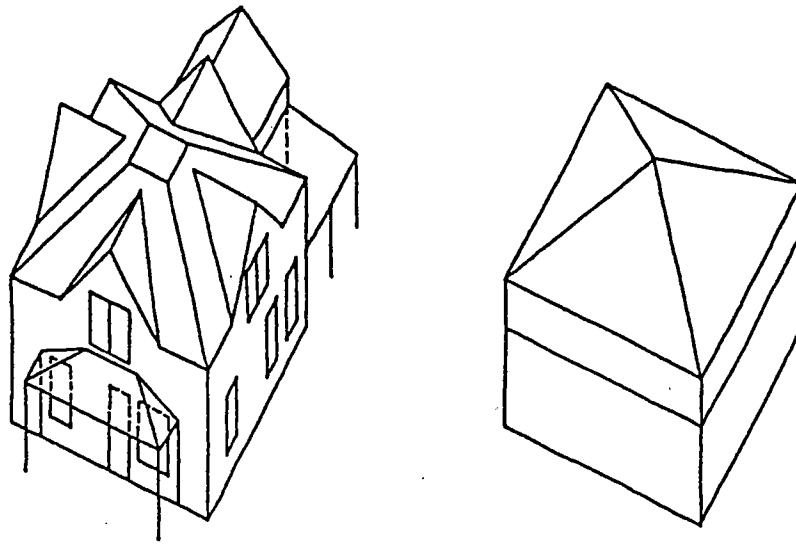


Fig. 4. The core structure derived from the house (after Murphy).

Shape designations for core structures are geometric, based on the ground-level outline of the core. Designations include square (S), rectangular (R), tee-shaped (T), ell-shaped (L), cross-shaped (X), U-shaped (U), polygonal (P), H-shaped (H), courtyard (C), irregular (I), and circular (O).

The horizontal size of the core is related to a need to distinguish large houses from small ones. Size, in the supratypal method, refers to horizontal dimension and is applied only to the narrowest dimension of the core, or to its width. While actual dimensions are recorded, houses are sorted based upon "units" of measurement which approximate the number of rooms a given width normally could contain (e.g., one, one with hall, two rooms, etc.). Units of width in the South Bottoms Historic District are defined as 0.5 (less than 14 ft.), 1.0 (14-19 ft.), 1.5 (20-29 ft.), 2.0 (30-39 ft.), and 2.5 (40 ft. or greater).

The second measurement of size involves the height of the core. We designate this dimension in terms of stories, even though it is based exclusively on the height of the external wall, not on the amount of usable internal space. The measurement is based on the facade wall, the top of which is expressed

by the eave line (Figure 5). Thus attics, the space beneath a sloping roof, are not considered in determinations of height.

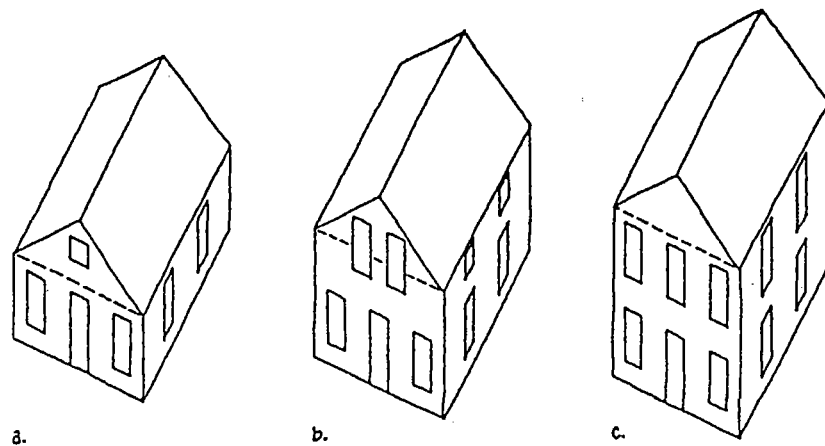


Fig. 5. Wall height guidelines illustrated, note the eave line: a) one story, b) one-and-one-half story, c) two story (after Murphy).

The fourth massing element is roof type. These are so well known that they need little explanation. The supratypal method utilizes only four generic types for simplicity, subsuming under these all the variants (Figure 6). The four types include flat (F), shed (S), hipped (H, including pyramidal and mansard), and gabled (G, including gambrel and gerkinhead).

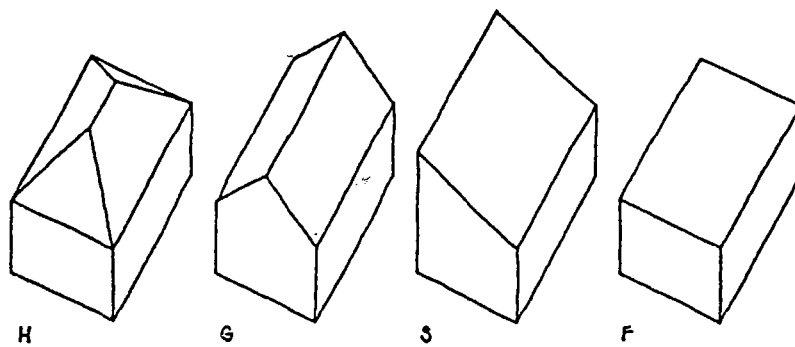


Fig. 6. Generic roof types: H: hipped; G: gable; S: shed; F: flat (after Murphy).

The last aspect of mass used in describing core supratypes involves the orientation of the core on the site, relative to its facade. Facade is defined as that wall which is the architectural front of the house, facing the road or the street, which is usually but not always more highly decorated. Facades also usually but not always incorporate the main entrance. Orientation is expressed in latitudinal (La), longitudinal (Lo), and non-applicable (Na) terms. There are several core shapes for which orientation is not applicable. Since only two shapes, the square (S) and the rectangular (R), are statistically significant in South Bottoms, orientation will be discussed only for those two here.

For rectangular shapes, if the narrow (gable) end faces the street, the axis of its roof is perpendicular to the street. Its orientation is then termed longitudinal (Lo). If the eave side faces the street, its roof ridge runs parallel to the street and its orientation is described as latitudinal (La). Orientation is always applicable for rectangular cores.

For square shapes (S), where both the front and side dimensions are equal, we would normally consider orientation to be non-applicable (Na). This is true for squares with hipped or pyramidal roofs. However, if the square core is sheltered by a gable roof, the ridge provides an illusion of orientation as though it were rectangular in shape. Therefore, square shapes with gable roofs have orientation recorded in the same fashion as that for rectangular cores.

In summary, core supratypes are external massing categorizations applied to the core structure of houses. Core structure is the predominant mass element which cannot be further subdivided (that portion of the house exclusive of subordinate wings and porches). Five massing aspects of the core are used to derive the supertype—its shape, relative size, height, roof type, and orientation. Particular combinations of these aspects

are designated numerically (S.#). (D. Murphy: South Bottoms Historic District National Register Nomination, 1987, 1-4).

Wheeler County House Types

A rather startling indication of the lack of historic properties in Wheeler County is the fact that only 55 total residential properties were recorded in a county which encompasses 576 square miles. Consequently, there are only 55 supratype descriptions available for analysis which represents a very small pool of data to draw conclusions from. For instance, only one individual supratype represents, by itself, 1.8% of the total house shapes in the county. In comparison, other northeast Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey counties such as Boyd and Holt had 256 and 519 supratype descriptions respectively. Save America's Heritage considers the 55 supratype descriptions of Wheeler County to be too small of a resource pool to draw a set of steadfast conclusions regarding house types in Wheeler County. However, the system of supratypal analysis exists as an established analytical tool within the NeHBS and should be applied in a consistent manner. Therefore, Save America's Heritage has organized a basic summary of supratype data which attempts to translate a basis of facts most useful in understanding the characteristics of Wheeler County's historic houses.

Despite the relatively low numbers of residential resources, the predominate house shapes of Wheeler County were no different than those of other northeast Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey counties. It is becoming increasingly clear to the survey team that the majority of Nebraska's historic residential properties constructed from roughly 1880 to 1930 will fall into one of approximately 12 major supratype groups. The same core forms are frequently repeated with only slight variations in aesthetic detailing. Certainly there exist exceptions to this hypothesis, but in general, a specific set of core types are predominating the numerical results of each of the four counties in which this analysis has now been applied.

The use of the Core Supratype analysis in the reconnaissance level survey proved beneficial in that it created an objective process of

interpretation for the recording of historic residences. The Wheeler County Historic Buildings Survey produced a total of 55 residential resources. This total represents 29% of the 189 contributing buildings within the study area. These 55 individual houses were assigned supertype descriptions and organized according to a sequential order of groups (S.1, S.2, S.3, etc.). A master list of the 55 individual types is included in this report as Appendix 2. The 55 houses recorded in Wheeler County all fit into 29 different supertype groups. On the surface, this represents quite a wide range of house shapes. However, in reality, 53% of the houses fit into one of seven core shapes. Furthermore, over one-third (36.4%) of the houses fit into one of only four supertypes. For the sake of inter-county comparison, these predominant four types are discussed in greater detail on the following pages.

Supratype 25



Supratype No. 25; S, 1.5u, 1.0s, H, n. Among the 29 supratypes present in Wheeler County, Supratype No. 25 was the most frequently recorded house form representing 12.7% of the 55 surveyed houses. The essential characteristics of this type consist of a one-story hipped roof square-shaped core ranging in width from 20 to 29 feet. Based on the size of this core, it is assumed that the typical plan consists of a four-room square arrangement with an offset front entry and side porch. The popularity of the one-story hipped roof square is no surprise for it was not only frequently employed in the immediate study area, but throughout much of the 1885 to 1905 built settlement of Nebraska as well.

Supratype 2



Supratype No. 2; R, .5u, 1.0s, G, Lo. Supratype No. 2 was the second most numerically significant house type (9.1%) among the 29 types generated by the Wheeler County survey. The essential character defining elements of the S.2 are a one-story rectangular core placed in a longitudinal orientation with the narrow gable-end front measuring less than 15 feet. These homes were found mostly in town locations (11.4%) rather than rural locations (.05%). The most striking feature of this type is its small proportions. It is presumed that these houses were built primarily before the 20th century and consist of simple two-room floor plans with either gable-end or side entries.

Supratype 1



Supratype No. 1; R, .5u, 1.0s, G, La. The third most frequently recorded supratype among the 29 total types in Wheeler County is Supratype No. 1. This type was represented in 7.3% of the 55 houses recorded and is distinctly similar to the aforementioned S.2. Both the S.1 and S.2 represent the smallest proportional dimensions within the supratype vocabulary. These proportions consist of a rectangular core not exceeding 14 feet in the narrowest dimension and limited to a height of one single story. Like the S.2, the S.1 is protected by a gable roof and is believed to contain a simple two-room plan. The primary differences in these two types are found in the rotation of the core to a latitudinal position for the S.1 (versus the longitudinal S.2) and the recording of the S.1 in strictly rural locations.

Supratype 16



Supratype No. 16; R, 1.5u, 1.0s, G, La. Also representing the third most numerically significant house type in Wheeler County is Supratype No. 16. The S.16 shares this spot with the aforementioned S.1 and may be considered a relative of the S.1 for they both belong to the R, G, La family of house types. Supratype 16 is, however, a proportionally larger type than the smaller S.1. Its essential character-defining elements consist of a one-story gable roof rectangular core with the narrowest dimension ranging from 20 to 29 feet. The S.16 quite often appears with an attached side wing of shorter gable height and with this, has become generically known as the "upright with wing." This type was documented in strictly rural locations throughout Wheeler County. Evidence of their existence was observed in town locations but due to later alterations, these properties lacked historic integrity and were not documented.

General Summary Part 3:

Preliminary Inventory and Topical Listing of Wheeler County Historic Properties

Two primary reasons exist for the evaluation of the resources documented by the Wheeler County survey. The first is the identification of properties worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and the second is the designation of those properties to be preserved by local planning processes. In response to these objectives, Save America's Heritage has developed two reference lists. The first is a Preliminary Inventory of the 10 properties within Wheeler County that exhibited the greatest potential for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. These properties are presented using photographic images and include historic names (if known), Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey site numbers, locational references, and relationships to potential Historic Contexts. The second reference list is a Topical Listing that, in addition to the site numbers of the 10 most eligible properties, includes the site numbers of 12 other historic resources judged as contributing to the historic character of the county but are of secondary priority with respect to listing. The Topical Listing, therefore, is primarily developed for use in preservation planning decisions and as a guide to those sites in Wheeler County which may yield additional information upon further research. Both lists are presented topically in an order consistent with the NeSHPO document "Historic and Prehistoric Contexts in Nebraska: A Topical Listing."

WH01-5: Wheeler County Fairgrounds, ca. 1929-1949

Potential Historic Context(s): Diversion - Fairs

Location: W.S. 3rd St. north of Randolph St., Bartlett, Wheeler County



Description

The Wheeler County Fair was established on its current grounds in 1889, just eight years after the organization of the county in 1881. The early history of the fair was somewhat sporadic with fairs held intermittently into the mid-1890s. At that time the fair was discontinued, perhaps due in part to economic hardships created by a succession of severe droughts. Sometime after the first World War, the fair was reintroduced with the formation of the Wheeler County Fair Association. The main component of the fair from the late 1920s to the mid-1950s was the R.C.A. approved rodeo. The rodeo was conducted from 1929 to 1954 and became a regular stop on the circuit following the Burwell Rodeo held in Garfield County. Evidence of the importance of the rodeo to the fair is seen in several buildings. They consist of the circa 1929 grandstand, judging tower, holding pens, and loading chutes. In all, the fairgrounds contain 12 contributing buildings and structures which, in general, retain their historic character.

WH02-1: Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Depot, 1888

Potential Historic Context(s): Transportation - Rail

Location: S.W.C. East Depot St. and Central Ave., Ericson, Wheeler County



Description

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Depot was selected for inclusion in the Preliminary Inventory based on its association with the initial establishment of rail transportation in Wheeler County. The CB&Q was extended from Greeley into Wheeler County in 1888 as part of a continuation of the Black Hills Route planned by the railroad but which proceeded no further than Ericson. At that time, a section house and elevator were built simultaneous to the construction of the depot. No other rail lines were ever developed in Wheeler County thus making this the only depot constructed in the county. Among the many services provided by the railroad, the CB&Q line out of Ericson was noted as the largest export point for cream in north central Nebraska. The building served as the depot until 1940 when the line was discontinued. The tracks were removed in 1942 and the depot sold to local citizens who, from 1942 to 1963, converted it for use as the Free Methodist Church.

WH03-1: House, ca. 1895

Potential Historic Context(s): Settlement Systems - Clustering: Rural

Location: S.S. Francke Ave. between Vansickle and Fowler St., Ericson Lake, Wheeler County



Description

This property was chosen for potential listing primarily for its association with the original, somewhat ill-fated development of Lake Ericson in the late 19th and early 20th century. The lake eventually became a reality in 1916 after two unsuccessful attempts at damming its source, the Cedar River. This property is believed to be a remnant of the early speculative development on the northern shore of the lake. It consists of a narrow rectangular core, one and one-half stories in height with a gable roof and side entry. While much of the building on the lake front consists of circa 1919 frame summer cabins, this property appears somewhat unique in form, age, and character. Of particular curiosity are the two small square windows found on the north gable end and east entry facade. The property was also considered to perhaps contain associations to ethnic cultures.

WH00-4: Theo Pofahl Barn, ca. 1915

Potential Historic Context(s): Agriculture - Livestock, Wild Hay & Cash Grain

Location: NE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 1, T.24 N., R.10 W., Wheeler County



Description

The Theo Pofahl Barn was selected for its incorporations of design aesthetics and for possible association with German-American immigration. The barn consists of a massive rectangular frame core oriented in latitudinal fashion with double side sheds. A central drive-thru runs lengthwise through the gambrel roof core presumably for convenience of feeding the stock penned in the stalls of the side sheds. Of particular interest are the two side gable wall dormers which are strikingly similar in design to those of two German-American built barns in Washington County--the Frederick Plugge Barn (WN00-124) and the John Giesselmann Barn (WN00-169). It must also be noted that no other barns displaying these features were documented in Wheeler County.

WH00-11: Lincoln Hilliard Farmstead, ca. 1910

Potential Historic Context(s): Settlement Systems - Clustering: Rural

Location: SE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 29, T.21 N., R.11 W., Wheeler County



Description

The Lincoln Hilliard Farmstead, in conjunction with the E. Doings Farmstead (WH00-14) illustrated on the following page, represent two potentially significant historic properties of great similarity. Both farmsteads are located in southwest Wheeler County approximately two and one-half miles apart and contain abandoned concrete block houses of identical supratype form. In the case of WH00-11 illustrated above, the house is believed to have been built by Lincoln Hilliard, an early permanent settler of southwest Wheeler County who migrated to this region in the early 1880s. The house consists of a square concrete block core covered with a hipped roof pierced by front and side gable dormers. The front entry is placed slightly off-center and presumably leads into a four-room square plan. The property was found in an abandoned and deteriorated condition and should be intensively researched to determine areas of possible significance.

WH00-14: E. Doings Farmstead, ca. 1910

Potential Historic Context(s): Settlement Systems - Clustering: Rural

Location: NE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 21, T.21 N., R.11 W., Wheeler County



Description

The Doings Farmstead is the second of two properties mentioned in southwestern Wheeler County which contain identical concrete block houses. The Doings House, illustrated above, consists of a concrete block square core and hipped roof very much like that of the Lincoln Hilliard House mentioned on the preceding page. Although the Doings originally settled in southwest Wheeler County in 1893, the extant assemblage of buildings documented by the survey is believed to have been built around 1910. Like the Hilliard House, the location of the front entry is slightly off-center and the roof is pierced by front and side dormers. The house was found in a deteriorated and abandoned condition and is recommended as a property worthy of further research.

WH00-19: Headquarters Ranch, ca. 1900

Potential Historic Context(s): Agriculture - Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain

Location: SE 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 20, T.23 N., R.10 W., Wheeler County



Description

In the beginning of the 20th century, a significant and lasting change in the agriculture industry was felt throughout Wheeler County. This era witnessed the coming of the large-scale ranching industry headed by non-resident millionaire landowners speculating in the cattle-producing industry. None of the Wheeler County ranches from this era had a greater impact and was more significant than Headquarters Ranch. S. W. Allerton, a millionaire from Chicago, came to Wheeler County at this time and started a land company known as the Allerton-Thompson Cattle Company. Allerton and his brother had formed the company with the aid of Charles Thompson and Frank Heston of Bartlett for the purpose of raising, buying, and selling livestock. They bought out many settlers in the Beaver Valley region and fenced government free range until the Kinkaid Act of 1904 forced them to rely strictly upon the purchase of nearby land. By the end of the first decade, the ranch contained 35,000 acres and employed over 25 cowboys. The two-story concrete block house was built approximately 1906 and housed many of the ranch employees. Some of the significant accomplishments of the ranch include the construction of the first section roads and telephone lines in Beaver Valley. After the death of Allerton in 1913, the ranch was sold to Asler Thompson and ceased to operate in 1917. It was then sold off in small tracts to incoming settlers.

WH00-30: John J. Schmeits Farmstead, 1913

Potential Historic Context(s): Settlement Systems - Clustering: Rural

Location: NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 13, T.21 N., R.11 W., Wheeler County



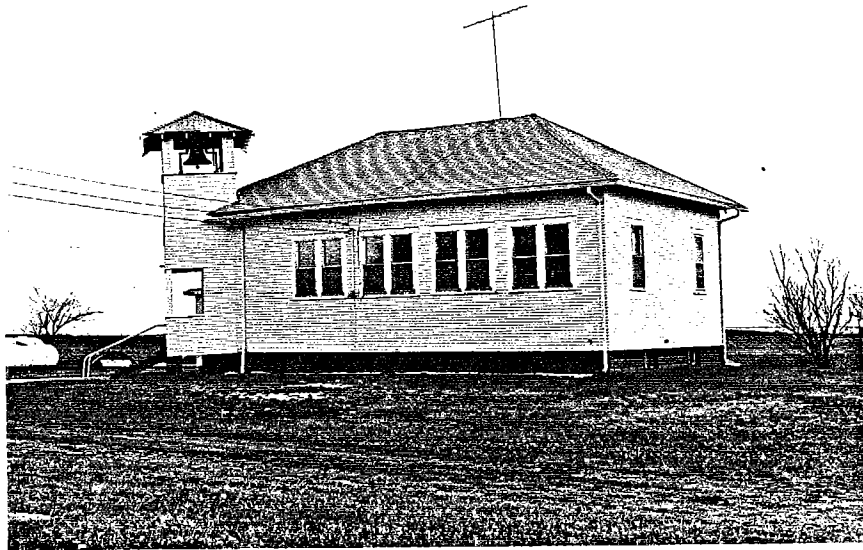
Description

The John J. Schmeits Farmstead was primarily selected for inclusion in the Preliminary Inventory for the gambrel roof concrete block house built in 1916. The property is potentially associated with ethnic cultures (presumably German-American) and contains a group of eight contributing buildings and objects which vary in their retention of historic integrity. In the spring of 1913, Joseph Schmeits purchased 400 acres of land from the Headquarters Ranch (WH00-19), at that time owned by Asler Thompson. In 1916, Schmeits constructed the concrete block house and related farm buildings. The overall condition and image of the property is unfortunately somewhat deteriorated and cluttered.

WH00-38: District #20, Center Schoolhouse, ca. 1915

Potential Historic Context(s): Education - Schooling

Location: NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 17, T.21 N., R.9 W., Wheeler County



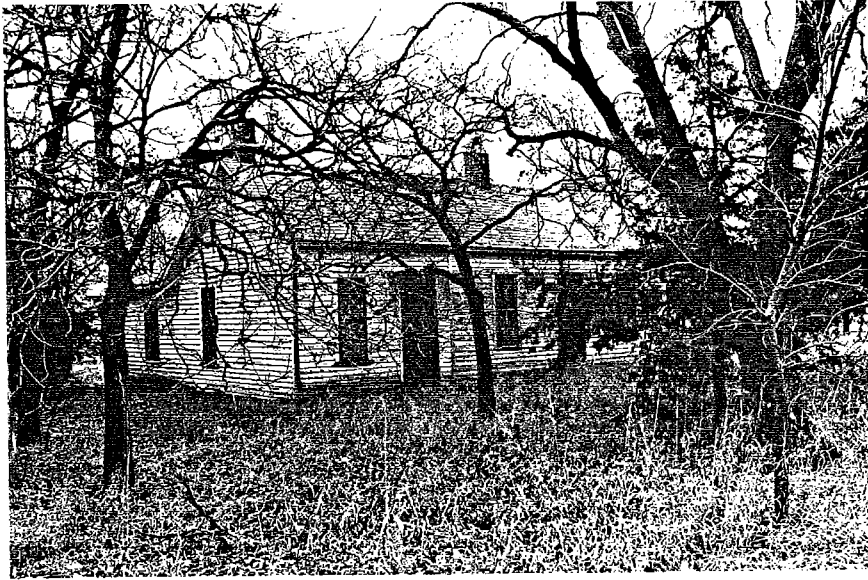
Description

Located in southeast Wheeler County, the District 20 Schoolhouse is not only one of the few operational rural schools in the county but is also one which bears an historic association with the primary development of the rural educational system in Wheeler County. The building is believed to have been built around 1915 and consists of a one-story frame structure with a raised concrete block basement and corner bell tower entry. Large areas of fenestration appear on the east and south facades in the form of paired double-hung windows.

WH00-44: C. E. Butler Farmstead, ca. 1897

Potential Historic Context(s): Settlement Systems - Clustering: Rural

Location: SW 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 31, T.21 N., R.9 W., Wheeler County



Description

The C. E. Butler property was included in the Inventory for potential links to ethnic immigration (perhaps Anglo-American) and as a representative of early Wheeler County rural settlement which retains a significant degree of historic integrity. C. E. Butler came to Wheeler County in 1886 from Red Oak, Iowa and purchased a farm in the southeast portion of the county. He was joined by his family in 1887 and subsequently farmed his acreage while living in a sod house. In 1897, Butler erected the frame house illustrated above and continued to engage in agricultural practices. While nothing remains of the original 1886 sod house, the frame house of 1897 is extant and retains a high degree of integrity. Subsequent generations of the Butler family continue to reside in this building.

Topical Listing of Wheeler County Historic Properties

The topical listing that follows is an enumeration of all historic properties documented during the Reconnaissance Survey which were judged as contributing to the historic character of Wheeler County. This list was derived from a post-survey evaluation and contains both the 10 potential National Register Properties as well as 12 other historic resources within Wheeler County considered worthy of preservation and future research. For detailed summaries of the 10 suggested National Register properties, please refer to the Preliminary Inventory preceding this listing.

The somewhat generous inclusion of properties in the inventories is a reaction to a fear of exclusiveness. If a property of which nothing is previously known can be included in the published inventory at a preliminary stage, that is, before further evaluation by NeSHPO staff, then it is assured of at least a minimum level of documentation and will not be lost in the depths of the history card files.

POLITICAL SYSTEM

County Government:

WH01-2: Wheeler County Courthouse, Bartlett, 1920, 1 contributing building

EDUCATION

Schooling:

WH00-20: Abandoned School, Dist. #15, ca. 1910, 2 contributing buildings

WH00-22: Abandoned School, ca. 1905, 3 contributing buildings

WH00-38: District #20 Schoolhouse, ca. 1915 (see Preliminary Inventory)

WH01-6: District #25 Schoolhouse, Bartlett, 1 contributing building

WH01-8: District #25 Schoolhouse, Bartlett, 1 contributing building

DIVERSION

Fairs:

WH01-5: Wheeler County Fairgrounds, ca. 1929 (see Preliminary Inventory)

Recreation:

WH03-4: Summer Cabin, ca. 1916, Ericson Lake, 1 contributing building

WH03-6: Summer Cabin, ca. 1916, Ericson Lake, 1 contributing building

AGRICULTURE

Northeastern Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain:

WH00-4: Theo Pofahl Barn, ca. 1915 (see Preliminary Inventory)

WH00-19: Headquarters Ranch, ca. 1900 (see Preliminary Inventory)

COMMERCE

Retail:

WH02-16: False Front Commercial Building, Ericson, ca. 1900, 1 contributing building

TRANSPORTATION

Rail:

WH02-1: CB&Q Depot, Ericson, 1888 (see Preliminary Inventory)

SETTLEMENT SYSTEMS

Clustering: Towns

WH03-1: House, Ericson Lake, ca. 1896 (see Preliminary Inventory)

WH02-8: Abandoned House, Ericson, ca. 1910, 2 contributing buildings

Clustering: Rural

WH00-11: Lincoln Hilliard Farmstead, ca. 1910 (see Preliminary Inventory)

WH00-14: E. Doings Farmstead, ca. 1910 (see Preliminary Inventory)

WH00-17: Abandoned Farmstead, ca. 1913, frame gambrel roof house, 6 contributing buildings and 2 contributing objects

- WHOO-28: Farmstead, ca. 1905, one-story frame house, possibly ethnic, 3 contributing buildings and 1 contributing object
- WHOO-30: John J. Schmeits Farmstead, 1913 (see Preliminary Inventory)
- WHOO-41: Abandoned Farmstead, ca. 1900, one and one-half story frame house, T-shaped, 1 contributing building
- WHOO-44: C. E. Butler Farmstead, ca. 1897 (see Preliminary Inventory)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Throughout the duration of the Wheeler County survey, random observations were recorded in an effort to later construct recommendations for future work. The general impressions recorded by the survey team were then combined with a post-survey analysis of documented historic properties. The resulting recommendations were conceptualized by Save America's Heritage to fit the "tools" of preservation and documentation available to the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. These tools consist of Multiple Property, Historic District, and individual nominations to the NRHP as well as intensive survey relating to Historic Context Reports.

The following suggestions are separated into two categories and are presented without reference to priority. The two categories are: 1) NeSHPO National Register Follow-Up, and 2) Research Studies.

National Register Recommendations

The first of the two categories, the NeSHPO National Register Follow-Up, is a basic summary of the potential National Register of Historic Places listing activities associated with the Wheeler County survey.

Save America's Heritage strongly suggests the drafting of nominations for all properties judged by NeSHPO staff as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The drafting of these nominations may occur in two basic forms. First, as Multiple Property nominations for all buildings which relate to Historic Contexts developed by the NeSHPO, or as individual nominations of the 10 properties listed in the

Preliminary Inventory of Wheeler County historic buildings. The properties which appear in the Preliminary Inventory are those which appear potentially eligible for the National Register and should be acted upon immediately following the submittal of this report.

Research Studies

The second category of recommendations for future field activity within the study area come under the heading of Research Studies. The implication of this title suggests that further investigation into the following hypotheses may yield information relevant to the context of Nebraska historic architecture. If further research within the boundaries of Wheeler County finds this hypothesis valid, then it is Save America's Heritage recommendation that all subsequent historic building surveys initiated by the State Historic Preservation Office continue the investigation of the following research topic.

A. Northeastern Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain Area

The recommendations for possible Historic Context Reports applicable to Wheeler County are somewhat limited due to the environmental and settlement factors mentioned repeatedly throughout the report. Indeed, only one contextual theme proved widespread enough to merit suggestion as a Historic Context Report worthy of development in Wheeler County. This potential Historic Context is the agriculture-based industry defined in the 1930s by three authors associated with the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture as the Northeastern Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain area. These authors (Harold Hedges, F. F. Elliott, and L. F. Garey) have described systems of farming in Nebraska to refer to areas with a high degree of uniformity in the type of farming practiced and the economic and environmental conditions of the defined area. According to these authors, Wheeler County is composed of two types of farming areas. The northwestern quarter of the county is on the eastern edge of the Sandhills where the system of farming is Range Livestock. The rest of the county is an area where the system of farming is Livestock, Hay and Cash Grain. The Livestock, Hay and Cash Grain area is a transitional system

lying between the Range Livestock of the Sandhills and the more intensive farming to the east and south.

As settlers came into the Livestock, Hay and Cash Grain area of Wheeler County, they brought with them the same agricultural practices they had known in the Midwest cornbelt. Corn was the usual first crop with oats, barley, wheat, rye, alfalfa, and wild hay also playing an important role in early agricultural development. However, it was the synthesis of the livestock industry with the grain crops which eventually built the agricultural foundation of the county. By the 1930s, the Livestock, Hay and Cash Grain system of farming was well established. The 1934 Census of Agriculture recorded 10,397 acres devoted to corn production with 19,022 head of cattle and 4,523 hogs present within the county.

The importance of livestock in Wheeler County has remained. In 1969 over 90% of the farms in the county reported some kind of livestock which amounted to over 90% of receipts from livestock and livestock products (Williams and Murfield, p. 33). It is therefore the recommendation of Save America's Heritage to the NeSHPO that the Northeastern Livestock, Wild Hay and Cash Grain Historic Context Report be pursued and a summary of associated property types be developed to aid in the evaluation of significant historic buildings.

APPENDIX 1

**A RESEARCH DESIGN
- FOR THE
HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY
OF
WHEELER COUNTY**

RECONNAISSANCE RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Introduction

It is the intention of this paper to contribute two important functions towards the execution of the Reconnaissance Survey of Wheeler County. First, it will provide Save America's Heritage (SAVE) survey team with the guidelines by which the survey will be performed and secondly, it establishes a means of communicating these guidelines to NeSHPO project managers for critique and refinement.

The format of this Research Design will be to discuss first the "non-mechanical" aspects of the survey, followed by a discussion of the tasks considered more "mechanical" in nature. The primary purpose of the "mechanical" discussion is to define the documentation process used in the recording of historic properties while the "non-mechanical" discussion will consist of the survey objectives and limitations.

2. Objectives Of Reconnaissance Survey

After completing a preliminary outline of the objectives associated with a reconnaissance survey, it became apparent that there was an obvious division between those objectives which were qualitative in nature and those that were quantitative. This division has organized the reconnaissance objectives into the two listings that follow.

Qualitative Objectives:

The most obvious objective of a reconnaissance-level survey is the concept of providing a preliminary characterization of the historic resources extant in a particular geographic area. Beyond this are several other very important objectives which may be used to enhance both the importance of the information generated by the reconnaissance-level survey and the importance of the survey itself. First among these additional objectives is the concept of establishing the setting of Nebraska's multi-contextual historic architecture. Each historic building survey performed will generate information which contributes to a statewide knowledge and builds a background which future survey information can be evaluated with.

Secondly, it is the objective of the historic building survey to identify specific properties or geographic areas which, in the event of an intensive survey, would contribute useful information to the above-mentioned multi-context setting. Further qualitative objectives include: the possible identification of specific building types, the identification of construction methodologies which may relate to or are unique to the context of Nebraska's historic architecture, the identification of sites worthy of National Register listing, and the expansion of knowledge relative to a specific geographic area within the state context such as ethnic settlement, building technologies and architectural image.

Outline of Qualitative Objectives:

- A. To create a community awareness and interest in Historic Preservation and the National Register of Historic Places.
- B. The documentation of several significant sites which will eventually be placed on the NRHP as individual, thematic, or district nominations.
- C. To document site information concerning building typologies in a format consistent with the NeSHPO Topical Listing, which can be used as an organizing element in the Final Report and Preliminary Inventory.
- D. To record any potential links between a particular ethnic settlement and its associated architectural images within the survey area.
- E. To complete a comprehensive, conscientious survey which will generate information useful to the planning process and future surveys.
- F. The collation of survey data for planning intensive survey and relating of information into the contextual frameworks.
- G. To promote historic preservation through the identification of the historic properties located within the county.
- H. To record information useful to the local planning decisions of the county when assessing projects affecting historic structures.
- I. To identify properties whose owners may be eligible for various kinds of federal, state, and local assistance in the event the owner

pursues the preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation of their historic building(s).

Quantitative Objectives:

- A. The recording of an estimated 75 sites in Wheeler County at the completion of the survey.
- B. The covering of approximately 48,000 acres (150 sq. miles) in Wheeler County. In addition, both (2) towns in Wheeler County will be surveyed.
- C. Identification of at least five sites per context worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.
- D. Evaluating by the following hierarchy those sites for a) high potential for significance, b) suspicious buildings—those buildings that may be of significance, c) no potential in comparison to others, d) those sites not likely to yield any information.

3. Methods Of Reconnaissance Survey

The "mechanical" aspect of reconnaissance historic building surveys will focus primarily upon the documentation process and corresponding methods used in the recording of historical resources. The recording technique is considered of prime importance and it is the attitude of Save America's Heritage to strive for a conscientious effort and accurate method while recording historic resources. To best communicate our intentions, the following discussion on survey methods has been organized into three groups. These are 1) pre-field research, 2) pre-field activities, and 3) field activities.

Pre-Field Research:

Following the selection of the survey's geographic boundaries by the NeSHPO, the pre-field research is begun and focuses primarily on the performance of archival research. The main purpose of archival research is to identify the nature of the survey area's settlement by culture, geographic location, and time frame. In addition, the archival research should attempt to identify potential themes of architectural, cultural,

and historical significance within the survey area, should they exist. While it is acknowledged that the extent and availability of research information varies according to the events and background of the area, the following references will be investigated prior to the reconnaissance survey: locally written county histories, county histories written within a statewide history, existing survey data in the NeSHPO site files including survey forms, the files of the NSHS photographic collections, centennial publications on community and church histories, archival maps and atlases, newspaper articles concerning a community's built environment, and literature published by local or county historical groups. The majority of these types of publications can be found in the libraries of state and county historical societies. A bibliography of all sources referenced should be maintained and, along with photocopied information, added to the site files. These general data files are organized according to specific counties, local communities, and individual sites. The files are used prior to reconnaissance survey to familiarize the surveyors with the survey area and are consulted again in the field during the survey. Added to the general files are all forms of public correspondence received up to the point the survey is begun.

Due to the absence of an existing Historic Overview report, extensive preparation becomes necessary to satisfactorily develop the concepts of the report. The content of the Historic Overview is considered a prime source of pre-survey information. Therefore, the following is an outline of the methodology to be employed by SAVE's personnel during the composition of the county Historic Overview.

Each Historic Overview report will identify important patterns, events, persons, or cultural values pertaining to the county. It is anticipated that the information within the Historic Overview will aid in the identification of property types associated with each individual theme. In the preparation of the Historic Overview, the following will be considered:

- A. Trends in area settlement and development.
- B. Aesthetic and artistic values embodied in architecture, construction technology, or craftsmanship.

- C. Research values or problems relevant to the county, social and physical sciences and humanities, and cultural interests of local communities.
- D. Intangible cultural values of ethnic groups and native American people.

Pre-Field Activities:

The topic of pre-field activities are considered separate from pre-field research on the basis of their more publicly extroverted nature. Save America's Heritage will begin the pre-field activities with the distribution of notices announcing the survey and its intentions to all the general public. This will be done by placing general notices in established commercial and non-commercial facilities of the communities, such as the U.S. Post Office, grocery stores, donut shops, etc. Reinforcing this is the dispersal of press releases to all active newspapers existing in the county. The intent of the release is to inform the public of the survey programs and to solicit their input in the identification of historic resources. In addition to this, communication will be established with the local historians and historical societies detailing our intent and welcoming their possible input. Included in this communication will be information concerning the thematic topics and the time frame of the survey. The final task of pre-field activity will be the precautionary attempts to eliminate public suspicion. The justifiable suspicion aroused by survey activities will potentially be eliminated through the listing of survey vehicles and personnel with local police departments and county sheriff patrols. (For examples of typical communications, see Appendix D.)

Field Activities—General:

The first step prior to embarking on the survey would be the assemblage of the necessary documents used during the recording of identified sites. This includes town plat maps, USGS 7 1/2 minute topographical maps, county road maps, site files, and the preparation of the Historic Overview. The recording of a county's significant sites

would be conducted during the reconnaissance survey and would consist of identifying structures, mapping locations, architectural descriptions, and photographic documentation. Any supplemental field notes derived from observations or public communications will also be added.

The reconnaissance photography would consist of two photographs per site from opposite 45 degree angles using a wide angle perspective correcting lens. In certain cases, additional photographs of the more significant structures will be recorded showing context, detailing, or construction. Brief descriptions of each site will be recorded to define basic characteristics of the site and aid in map location during the post-survey cataloging. For domestic sites, the supratypological vocabulary developed by The Midwest Vernacular Architecture Committee will be used in the description process. Photographic field notes will also be kept concerning the aspect of the image, exposure number, and corresponding roll number. In addition to the recording of the information listed above, further research will be conducted on those sites which are considered to have greater significance.

A primary concept in the documentation of historic buildings is the recognition that different building types may require different recording techniques. Therefore, it is necessary for the surveyor to define the specific types of information most relevant to the typology of the property he is documenting.

4. Reconnaissance Survey Biases

Integrity:

To be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a property must possess integrity. Integrity is the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period. If a property retains the physical characteristics it possessed in the past then it has the capacity to convey association with historical patterns or persons, architectural design, or information about a culture or people. Consequently, the determination of integrity is considered a most important field activity.

For reconnaissance-level documentation, two very basic questions must first be asked. These are:

1. Is the building at least 50 years old?
2. Does it retain its integrity?

The answer to question #1 is usually quite objective; however, the determination of integrity requires some discussion.

It must first be recognized that the degree of integrity exhibited by historic buildings can vary greatly. The principal investigator must first ask, "Does this property reflect its historic character or has it been altered by the application of contemporary building materials and technologies?" In most instances, the house is the first building scrutinized, especially in the case of town surveys where they represent the majority of extant buildings. However, the importance of "house integrity" is diminished when dealing with buildings located in rural settings. For most cases in Nebraska, this means a farmstead. With the added significance of agricultural-related buildings (such as hay, horse and livestock barns, granaries, corn cribs, and elevators), a limited amount of alteration to the house should not prevent the site from being documented. In the case where a farmstead contains a large historic representation of farm buildings with a severely altered house, the site will be documented as a farmstead with a non-contributing house. A final case may exist where a single, highly significant, farm-related building is located within an otherwise altered farmstead. In this event, Save America's Heritage will document the individual building designating a site number solely to the specific building, structure, or object.

Integrity also appears to play an important role in the field documentation of commercial buildings. Traditionally, buildings used for commerce have been adaptively reused by subsequent generations. These buildings are positioned along a primary local thoroughfare or even a regionally important highway, thus lending appeal to present-day retailers seeking new locations. Often the buildings are physically altered to accommodate new functions and therefore suffer a loss of integrity. With this in mind, only those buildings exhibiting the visual characteristics of their historic period will be documented.

In summary, the determination of integrity will be based upon the historic retention of the following physical characteristics.

- Materials: Does the building retain the original materials from its period of historic importance?
- Location: Is the building placed in its original location or has it been moved?
- Design: Does the building reflect the design aesthetics of its historic period?
- Setting: Does the building reflect a historic "sense of place"?
Does the historic image and feel still exist?
- Function: Does the building represent its historic use?

Characteristics of Rural Integrity:

With the concept of Rural Historic Districts added to the National Register process, the principal investigator is forced to develop new visual sensitivities which are sympathetic to the qualities of rural settings. New methods of survey and research must be added to our understanding of both the built and natural environment and the historic relationship between them.

With this in mind, Save America's Heritage will attempt, without contractual obligation, to observe the following characteristics of potential significance to rural historic enclaves.

- The condition and presence of features, natural and built, which relate to a historic period of importance.
- The ability of a rural environment to reflect a sense of a past time or place.
- Potential unifying factors which may link rural properties together.
- The potential significance of historic contexts not preliminarily identified as important to the study area.
- The overall patterns of landscape spatial organization (landforms, natural features, material components).
- Land-use categories and activities (farming, ranching, recreation).
- Response to natural features (landform affect on material components).

- Boundaries (cultural, political, or natural).
- Cluster arrangements (position of material elements within landscape setting).
- Ecological context (Missouri River Valley).
- Integrity: Loss of natural features that were historically integral to the rural setting and intrusion of non-contributing features.
- The presence of sociocultural institutions with association to buildings within the district (granges, township halls).

5. Anticipated Property Types

Save America's Heritage anticipates the identification of historic properties in each of the following nine categories.

- ECCLESIASTICAL: Churches, church schools, parsonages, and convents
- COMMERCIAL: Banks, liverys, agricultural dealers, hotels, auto dealers, general stores, newspapers, cafes, and grocery stores
- TOWN-RESIDENTIAL: Single family dwellings, high-rise apartment blocks
- RURAL-RESIDENTIAL: Farm houses
- INDUSTRIAL: Utility buildings (electrical, water, telephone) and private manufacturing warehouses
- ENGINEERING: Rail bridges, highway bridges, dams, and tunnels
- AGRICULTURAL: Cattle barns, horse barns, hog barns, hog fences, cattle fences, cellars, cob houses, orchards, windmills, windbreaks, pump systems, cattle loafing sheds, hog loafing sheds, farrowing houses, corn cribs, wash houses, summer kitchens, chicken houses, brooder houses, machine shops, implement sheds, granaries, silos, elevators, and stock tank systems
- TRANSPORTATION: Depots, garages, gas stations, auto dealerships, and roundhouses

- PUBLIC BUILDINGS: Elementary and high schools, post offices, libraries, park structures, courthouses, hospitals, and township halls

6. Evaluation Process and Criteria

Process Of Evaluation:

Two primary reasons exist for the evaluation of the resources documented by the Historic Buildings survey. The first is the identification of properties worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and the second is the designation of those properties to be preserved by local planning processes. The National Register criterion A, B, C, and D as translated by the Historic Context Reports shall be the basis for evaluation.

The Preliminary Inventory is the primary reference list of all properties within Wheeler County that are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, its primary purpose is to define the entire "pool" of historic resources which appear potentially eligible for listing.

The Preliminary Inventory also fulfills additional roles which include its use as a guide for suggesting future work in the study area and the identification of building types which are no longer extant or never existed within the study area. The analysis of the inventoried data may also provide the NeSHPO with answers to the following questions:

1. What percentage of the total number of sites surveyed were worthy of intensive survey on the basis of their association to an identified historic theme or to a preliminarily identified Historic Context?
2. What percentage of the total number of sites surveyed were worthy of intensive survey as non-historic context sites?
3. What percentage of those sites **noted during the field survey** as potentially significant were actually found to be significant for:
 - a. Historic context sites?
 - b. Non-historic context sites?

Save America's Heritage originally viewed the assembling of the Preliminary Inventory as a two-step process consisting of survey and review. However, as outlined below, a refined methodology has evolved from previous survey experience which now involves several levels of evaluation. What has emerged is a more in-depth compilation of potential NRHP sites using a variety of historical and contemporary resources.

Initial base list of potentially eligible properties derived from review of reconnaissance survey documentation.

Review of contact sheets and site descriptions performed to add or delete base-list properties.

Land atlas research documenting historic chain of ownership (1891, 1911, 19250 for rural base-list properties.

Deed, mortgage, and mechanic's lien research performed on selected sites to develop list of original owners and historic typologies.

Review all published county, church, and centennial histories, with particular emphasis on historic building citations of base-list properties.

Contact local historical societies for input on histories of base-list properties.

Second base-list review with application of criterion to derive final lists of sites which:

- a) are strongly recommended for NRHP listing, and
- b) may not be strongly recommended for listing but contribute to the character of the historic built environment.

Criteria For Evaluation:

If the ultimate goal of the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey is indeed the identification of properties worthy of National Register listing, then the definitions and criteria established by the NRHP become the primary concepts by which the significance of a historic property is evaluated.

The National Register defines a historic property as a district, site, building, structure, or object significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archeology, and culture. A historic context is a broad pattern of historical development in a community or its region, that may be represented by historic resources. The use of historic contexts provides a mechanism for translating the broad National Register criteria into locally meaningful terms. For example, the National Register criteria allow any property that is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past to be regarded as eligible for listing, but it is the historic contexts of the area that define who such people were (p. 55, Nat. Reg. Bulletin, No. 24, V. 5, Dept. of the Interior). With this in mind, the National Register criteria translated into local meaning by the Historic Context Reports are as follows:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and

distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

- D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**ETHNIC SUMMARY OF WHEELER COUNTY, NEBRASKA
IN 1880, 1890, 1900, AND 1910**

<u>Nativity</u>	<u># No.</u>	<u>Total Foreign-Born Population</u>	<u>% of Foreign-Born Population</u>	<u>Total County Population</u>	<u>% of Total County Population</u>
<u>1880</u>					
1. Anglo	29	99	29.3	644	4.5
2. Canadian	22	99	22.2	644	3.4
3. German	19	99	19.2	644	3.0
4. Irish	16	99	16.2	644	2.5
<u>1890</u>					
1. German	79	231	34.2	1,683	4.7
2. Anglo	50	231	21.6	1,683	3.0
3. Swedish	33	231	14.3	1,683	2.0
4. Eng. Can.	28	231	12.1	1,683	1.7
<u>1900</u>					
1. German	56	182	30.8	1,362	4.1
2. Anglo	30	182	16.5	1,362	2.2
3. Swedish	29	182	15.9	1,362	2.1
4. Austrian	23	182	12.6	1,362	1.7
<u>1910</u>					
1. German	57	173	33.0	2,292	2.5
2. Norwegian	25	173	14.5	2,292	1.1
3. Swedish	22	173	12.7	2,292	0.96
4. Irish	22	173	12.7	2,292	0.96

*Note: The term Anglo refers to the United Kingdom nations excluding Ireland which is represented separately. Anglo, therefore, refers to natives of England, Scotland, and Wales.

APPENDIX 2

Wheeler County Supratype Master List

Wheeler County House Types

The listing of residential properties surveyed in Wheeler County utilized the supratype method of description. As illustrated below, this list indicates a total of 29 core supratypes representing the 55 total residential properties documented within the county.

Each supratype is listed according to its six core descriptors which are found at the headings of each column. The core supratype number is found in the first column followed by the descriptors which are, respectively: core shape (SH), horizontal width in units (SZ), wall height in stories (HT), roof type (RF), orientation (OR), and entry location (DR). The total number of the supratype in Wheeler County is found in the next column (#), followed by the percentage of that type within Wheeler County (% WH).

<u>S.Type</u>	<u>SH</u>	<u>SZ#</u>	<u>HT</u>	<u>RF</u>	<u>OR</u>	<u>DR</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>% WH</u>
S.1	R	.5	1.0	G	La	FE	4	7.30
S.2	R	.5	1.0	G	Lo	FE	5	9.10
S.3	R	.5	1.0	H	La	FE	1	1.80
S.4	R	.5	1.0	H	Lo	SE	1	1.80
S.5	R	.5	1.5	G	La	FE	2	3.60
S.6	R	.5	1.5	G	Lo	SE	1	1.80
S.7	R	1.0	1.0	G	La	FE	2	3.60
S.8	R	1.0	1.0	G	Lo	FE	3	5.50
S.9	R	1.0	1.0	GG	Lo	FE	2	3.60
S.10	R	1.0	1.0	GG+J	Lo	FE	1	1.80
S.11	R	1.0	1.0	H	La	FE	1	1.80
S.12	R	1.0	1.0	H	Lo	FE	1	1.80
S.13	R	1.0	1.5	F	La	FE	1	1.80
S.14	R	1.0	1.5	G	Lo	SE	1	1.80
S.15	R	1.0	1.5	GG	La	SE	1	1.80
S.16	R	1.5	1.0	G	La	SE	4	7.30
S.17	R	1.5	1.0	G	Lo	FE	3	5.50
S.18	R	1.5	1.0	H	La	FE	1	1.80
S.19	R	1.5	1.0	H	Lo	FE	2	3.60
S.20	R	1.5	1.5	GG	Lo	FE	1	1.80
S.21	R	1.5	1.5	GX	La	FE	1	1.80
S.22	R	1.5	2.0	H	La	FE	1	1.80

<u>S.Type</u>	<u>SH</u>	<u>SZ#</u>	<u>HT</u>	<u>RF</u>	<u>OR</u>	<u>DR</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>% WH</u>
S.23	R	2.0	1.0	G	La	FE	1	1.80
S.24	S	1.0	1.0	HG	N	FE	1	1.80
S.25	S	1.5	1.0	H	N	FE	7	12.70
S.26	S	1.5	2.0	H	N	FS	1	1.80
S.27	S	2.0	1.0	G	N	FE	1	1.80
S.28	S	2.0	2.0	HT	N	FE	3	5.50
S.29	T	1.0	1.5	G	Lo	FE	1	1.80

APPENDIX 3

Index of Abbreviations

The following index attempts to explain the abbreviations used by the survey team while recording historic buildings in the eight-county area of the Northeast Nebraska survey project. These abbreviations were developed as a means of expediting the survey recording process. The need for abbreviations was especially necessary in the recording of rural-based historic properties. In these cases, every effort was made to note each building, structure, and object which contributed to the historic character of the property. Many of the abbreviations were developed by the NeSHPO during their former surveys of historic buildings throughout Nebraska. The remaining group of abbreviations were developed by Save America's Heritage with the approval of the NeSHPO. It should be mentioned that these abbreviations were used extensively and were transferred from field notes to the history cards with the approval of the NeSHPO.

Fr.	= Frame	Addn.	= Addition
Br.	= Brick	Cent.	= Central
Conc. blk.	= Concrete block	Enc.	= Enclosed
Frmhse.	= Farmhouse	Att.	= Attached
Frmstd.	= Farmstead	Perpend.	= Perpendicular
Hse.	= House	Symm.	= Symmetrical
S.K.	= Summer kitchen	Lg.	= Large
Ckn. hse.	= Chicken house	G.W.D.	= Gable wall dormer
Gar.	= Garage	E.G.W.D.	= Entry gable wall dormer
Gran.	= Granary	Gab.	= Gable
Carr. barn	= Carriage barn	Drmr.	= Dormer
D.T. gran.	= Drive-thru granary	Outbldg.	= Outbuilding
D.T. crib	= Drive-thru crib	Aban.	= Abandoned
L.S.	= Loafing shed	Det.	= Deteriorated

Hd. hse. = Head house
W.W. fence = Woven wire fence
Bd. fence = Board fence
Fdn. = Foundation
Rf. = Roof
Chim. = Chimney

N.C. = Non-contributing
P.O. = Present owner
Orig. = Original
Cem. = Cemetery
Orn. = Ornamental